

Message Text

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47

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 884

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJ: TALKS ON PRC-JAPAN FISHERIES AGREEMENT

REF: HK 4911, TOKYO 6759

SUMMARY: A JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FISHERIES DELEGATION ARRIVED IN PEKING MAY 23 FOR TALKS ON A SINO-JAPANESE FISHERIES AGREEMENT. NEGOTIATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO LAST ONE MONTH, AND END WITH THE SIGNING OF A NEW ACCORD. IN DISCUSSING THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS, A HONG KONG JAPANESE CONGENOFF HAS PROVIDED CONGEN WITH FIGURES ON PRC MARITIME PRODUCTION AND FISHING OPERATIONS IN THE YELLOW AND EAST CHINA SEAS. END SUMMARY.

1. A FOURTEEN -MEMBER GOJ DELEGATION, LED BY MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERY DEPARTMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR KAZUO YASUFUKU, ARRIVED IN PEKING MAY 23 FOR FINAL TALKS ON THE SINO-JAPANESE FISHERIES AGREEMENT (NCNA).

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ACCORDING TO A HONG KONG JAPANESE CONGENOFF WHO MET

WITH DELEGATION MAY 20 DURING HONG KONG STOPOVER, NEGOTIATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO LAST ABOUT ONE MONTH AND END WITH THE SIGNING OF A NEW GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT. THE CURRENT PRIVATE AGREEMENT EXPIRES ON JUNE 22. NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON MAY 15, BUT WERE DELAYED FOR UNEXPLAINED REASONS AT PEKING'S REQUEST.

2. ALTHOUGH THE JAPANESE FORESEE NO MAJOR OBSTACLES SOME PROBLEMS MUST BE RESOLVED BEFORE AN AGREEMENT CAN BE SIGNED. THE MAIN POINT OF CONTENTION IS PEKING'S DESIRE TO MAINTAIN A MILITARY DEMARCATION LINE IN THE YELLOW AND EAST CHINA SEAS AND PREVENT JAPANESE FISHING WITHIN THE LINE. INSTEAD, THE JAPANESE HOPE TO ESTABLISH FISHING ZONES OR PRESERVES WHERE BOATS FROM BOTH COUNTRIES CAN OPERATE. THE CHINESE HAVE ALSO TAKEN A STRICTER VIEW OF THE NEED FOR CONSERVATION OF MARINE RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY CERTAIN SPECIES OF BOTTOM FISH. RATHER THAN ESTABLISH QUOTAS, THE JAPANESE HOPE TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM THROUGH AGREEMENT ON FISHING SEASONS, SIZE OF NETS AND NUMBER OF BOATS. QUOTAS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER AND MIGHT LEAD TO NEEDLESS DISAGREEMENTS, THE JAPANESE FEEL.

3. ANOTHER PROBLEM THE JAPANESE HOPE TO AVOID IS DISCUSSION OF CHINESE SEIZURES OF JAPANESE FISHING BOATS. ALTHOUGH SUCH SEIZURES HAVE OCCURRED IN THE PAST, THE JAPANESE SIDE DOES NOT PLAN TO RAISE THE MATTER IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO THE JAPANESE CONGEN SOURCE, THE DELEGATION DOES NOT INCLUDE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE JAPAN MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM.

4. IN DISCUSSING THE CURRENT TALKS, JAPANESE CONGENOFF ALSO PROVIDED INFORMATION ON PRC MARITIME PRODUCTION OBTAINED IN CHINA BY A JAPANESE DELEGATION DURING PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ON THE AGREEMENT HELD FROM APRIL 16-24 (REFTEL). ACCORDING TO THE CANTON PROVINCIAL MARINE PRODUCTS INSTITUTE, YEARLY PROVINCIAL PRODUCTION OF MARITIME FISHERY PRODUCTS IS 300,000 MT OR 11 PERCENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE NATIONAL TOTAL. THE INSTITUTE ALSO SAID THAT CHINA'S PRESENT RATIO BETWEEN FRESH WATER AND MARITIME CATCHES WAS TWO TO THREE. BASED ON THESE FIGURES, WE ESTIMATE TOTAL PRODUCTION OF MARITIME PRODUCTS AT 3 MILLION MT AND COMBINED FRESH AND SALT WATER PRODUCTION AT 5 MILLION MT.

5. IN COMPARING OPERATIONS BY BOTH COUNTRIES, THE INSTI-

TUTE SAID THAT CHINA NOW HAS 600 FISHING BOATS,
AVERAGING 120 TONS, OPERATING IN THE YELLOW AND EAST
CHINA SEAS. JAPAN'S TRAWLERS ARE SLIGHTLY LARGER,
AVERAGING 200 TONS. EFFICIENCY, HOWEVER, IS ROUGHLY
SIMILIAR SINCE BOTH SIDES SAID THAT CATCH PER NET
AVERAGED ONE HALF MT.
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